

MR2863-41

• Appl. No. 10/052,540

Amendment dated 17 December 2003

Responsive to Office Action dated 25 August 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed in view of the Official Action dated 25 August 2003. Responsive to the rejections made in the Official Action, Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to clarify the combination of elements which form the invention of the subject Patent Application. Additionally, Claims 2-5 and 7-13 have been canceled by this Amendment.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as being anticipated by Paskalov, et al., U.S. Patent #5,344,462. The Examiner stated that the Paskalov reference disclosed a system for enhancing the hydrophilic surface properties of materials including those made of natural and synthetic fibers by treating with a low temperature plasma of an inorganic gas at a pressure of 0.01-10 torr. The Examiner further stated that the gases included argon, nitrogen, and ammonia. With respect to the process, the Examiner stated that the reference discloses material being placed in an enclosed chamber, with gas being supplied from a gas supplying device, and high power being supplied to ionize the gas to produce the plasma gas. The Examiner further stated that as a result of the treatment, the fabric was better able to absorb water and other liquids.

It is respectfully submitted that the referenced system is directed to a gas plasma treatment for modifying surface wetting properties of materials. Coupled to the vacuum chamber 2, there are three gas bottles 4 for supplying one or more inorganic gases and

water vapor. In addition to oxygen, the other inorganic gases which are disclosed as usable in the treatment are argon, nitrogen, and nitrous oxide (NO). Nowhere does the reference disclose or suggest the use of either helium or ammonia, as now defined in Claim 6 of the subject Patent Application.

The invention of the subject Patent Application similarly utilizes a plasma to treat the surface of fabrics containing artificial fiber. However, the gas source which supplies the gas to the closed tank includes no means for supplying water vapor. Thus, Claim 1 now defines the gas source as being devoid of means for supplying water vapor to the closed tank. Thus, with respect to Claim 1, the reference fails to disclose a system where fabrics are treated by a plasma gas without the addition of water vapor. With respect to Claim 6, the reference fails to disclose a system wherein the gas supplied is one selected from the group consisting of helium (He), and ammonia gas (NH₃).

As the reference fails to disclose each and every one of the elements of the invention of the subject Patent Application, it cannot anticipate that invention.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable over Paskalov, et al. As previously discussed, the reference fails to disclose a treatment process wherein gas is supplied by gas source that is devoid of means for supplying water vapor and where the gas is selected from a group consisting of helium, and ammonia gas. As the reference fails to disclose or suggest the combination of elements which form the invention of the subject Patent Application, as now claimed,

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and in fact, teaches away from such combination, it cannot make obvious that invention either.

It is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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